

# Trade Notes...

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## **USDA and National Restaurant Association Team Up**

USDA and the National Restaurant Association are working together to expand exports of U.S. food products. The hotel, restaurant and institutional food sector is experiencing rapid growth in many countries. Under a new agreement, FAS and the association have identified potential areas in which to work together, such as promoting participation in trade shows and trade missions, educating potential exporters about the opportunities in various export markets, identifying and reducing trade barriers for U.S. products and researching overseas markets. The National Restaurant Association's 52,000 member companies represent more than 254,000 restaurant establishments. For more information on the agreement between FAS and the National Restaurant Association, contact Mark Smith, FAS AgExport Services Division, at: Tel.: (202) 690-2494.

## **U.S. Wood Exports to Middle East Stable**

U.S. wood product exports to the Middle East region remain stable. Total U.S. exports of agricultural and industrial goods to the region have dropped 13 percent since January 2002, and sales of certain high-profile American products have fallen further. However, U.S. wood product exports to the Middle East grew 22.5 percent during the first six months of 2002 compared with the same period of 2001. U.S. exporters shipped more than \$37 million worth of solid wood products to the Middle East from January to June 2002, compared with \$31 million during the first six months of 2001.

## **U.S. Pear Exports Hit Record**

During the 2001/02 marketing season (July-June), the United States exported more than 170,000 tons of pears, valued at \$98 million, setting records. Mexico, with nearly half of purchases, remained the top destination for U.S. pears, even though levels were down slightly from the previous year. Shipments to Canada, the second-largest buyer of U.S. pears, totaled 50,000 tons, for \$34 million or 35 percent of the value exported. Combined, Mexico and Canada accounted for three-quarters of the volume and 80 percent of the value of U.S. pear shipments abroad. Exports are vital to the success of the U.S. pear industry, generating a significant and growing share of pear producers' income. Ample supplies of good-quality, fresh pears, along with the diversion of more processing pears into the fresh market and continued promotional efforts, have kept U.S. pear exports strong.

## **USDA Launches Production, Supply and Demand (PSD) Database Site**

A new online database Web site provides current and historical USDA data on production, supply and distribution of agricultural commodities for the United States and key producing and consuming countries. The PSD online site can be found at: [www.fas.usda.gov/psd](http://www.fas.usda.gov/psd)